Coordinates: 33°51′50″S 151°12′41″E

Museum of Sydney

The **Museum of Sydney** is a historical collection and exhibit, built on the ruins of the house of New South Wales' first Governor, Arthur Phillip, on the present-day corner of Phillip and Bridge Street, Sydney.

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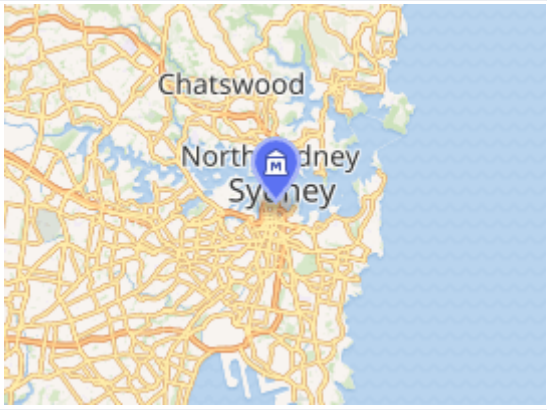
Museum of Sydney

Museum of Sydney from Bridge St



Established	1995
Location	Corner of Phillip and Bridge Streets, Sydney
Coordinates	33°51′50″S 151°12′41″E
Website	Museum of Sydney (https://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/museum-of-sydney)

Description

The original house, which was Australia's first Government House, was built in 1788 and later abandoned. The foundations were exposed by archaeologists in 1983.[1] The new museum building on the site was designed by Denton Corker Marshall architects.[2] The museum was built as part of the Governor Phillip Tower development and is managed by the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales.

The Museum of Sydney explores colonial and contemporary Sydney through objects, pictures, and new digital media techniques. Panoramic views of Sydney— from 1788 until today— stretch across walls and video screens. Sydney's convict era is explored in a giant showcase of goods and chattels recovered from more than 25 archaeological digs.

Origins of the name

When it was commissioned, the project was called the *First Government House Museum*.[3][4][5] While the museum building was being built in November 1993, the New South Wales Minister for the Arts announced that the museum would be known as the *Museum of Sydney on the Site of First Government House*,[6][7] described in the press at the time as a "mouthful"[6] and commonly contracted to The Museum of Sydney.[3] The change of name attracted protests.[8][3][4]

Forecourt

The public entrance to the museum is via First Government House Place in Bridge Street, Sydney.[8] The outline of Phillip's residence, the first Government House, is marked out on the plaza with inlaid stone.[6] Excavation of the site revealed examples of covered drains dated to the late 1790s and brick barrel drains dated to circa 1811 and another to circa 1828. The remains of the drains and privies are shown in their original context, along with other archeological artifacts, in glass display cases built into the pavement of the forecourt.[9][10]

Edge of the Trees, artwork in the museum forecourt, installed in 1995.

References

1. Historic Houses Trust of NSW (http://www.hht.net.au/museums/mos) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20140126160916/http://www.hht.net.au/museums/mos) 26 January 2014 at the Wayback Machine, retrieved 2009-10-07
2. AIA Architecture award (http://www.architecture.com.au/awards_search?option=showaward&entryno=19972013) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20120222015955/http://www.architecture.com.au/awards_search?option=showaward&entryno=19972013) 22 February 2012 at the Wayback Machine, retrieved 2009-10-07
3. Peter Poland (President, Woollahra History and Heritage Society Inc), "Intellectual Hijacking" (letter to the editor), The Sydney Morning Herald, 1 December 1993, p. 14."Geraldine O'Brien is right when she describes "The Museum of Sydney on the Site of First Government House" as a mouthful (Herald, November 20). The sad thing is that this title will be shortened to "The Museum of Sydney" which will both obscure the real significance of this very important and historic site and totally mislead those who visit the museum. The significance of the First Government House is that it was the powerhouse of the European settlement in this part of the Pacific. On this site decisions were made which not only affected the exploration of and expansion into Australia of the newcomers with all that that meant for both them and the Aborigines but also decisions which reached out to the world from Cape Town to Calcutta, Canton and California and all points in between. To call the museum which should be interpreting the far-reaching significance of this site "The Museum of Sydney" reflects an arrogance that assumes that Sydney is the only place that matters and an act of intellectual hijacking on the part of those who have been given responsibility of what was to be "The First Government House Museum"."
4. Adrian Bain, "Phillip needs filip" (letter to the editor), Daily Telegraph (Sydney), 21 December 2002, p. 32.
5. Fraser Range Granite NL, "Quarterly Exploration Reports December (Part A)", 27 January 1994, Australian Stock Exchange Company Announcements via factiva accessed 27 August 2011.

6. Geraldine O'Brien, "History underfoot in new museum on significant site", The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 November 1993, p. 15
7. *Local Government (General) Amendment (Rate Exemptions) Regulation 2009* (NSW) and reg 123, *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (NSW).
8. "Column 8", The Sydney Morning Herald, 27 January 1995, p. 1. "IT WAS, perhaps, the most genteel demonstration ever held in Sydney—the holding up of placards by the Friends of the First Government House Site at the opening of First Government House Place in Bridge Street yesterday. The Friends were the first to agitate in the early 1980s to stop the site being covered by an office block. An archaeological survey uncovered the footings of Governor Phillip's house, and after long negotiations, a museum has been built there, to open on March 11. Why are the Friends upset? They had expected their preferred name, First Government House Museum, would be chosen. Instead, the Heritage Houses Trust has called it The Museum of Sydney - so some 50 Friends had their quiet, polite, gentle and heartfelt say when the place was opened."
9. "Museum of Sydney Guidebook" (https://web.archive.org/web/20140110024216/http://www.hht.net.au/discover/highlights/guidebooks/museum_of_sydney_guidebook). *Sydney Living Museums*. Historic Houses Trust of NSW. Archived from the original (http://www.hht.net.au/discover/highlights/guidebooks/museum_of_sydney_guidebook) on 10 January 2014. Retrieved 3 January 2014. "Underfloor: The remains of first Government House's drains and privies are exposed below the floor. Also displayed is a selection of relics, ruins and rubbish from the house retrieved by archaeologists in the 1980s."
10. Anna Wong, "Colonial Sanitation, Urban Planning and Social Reform in Sydney, New South Wales 1788–1857", (1999) Australasian Historical Archaeology, Vol. 17, pp. 58-69 via JStor (https://www.jstor.org/stable/29544431) accessed 27 August 2011.11:02

External links

- Museum of Sydney (https://web.archive.org/web/20140114224918/http://www.hht.net.au/museums/museum_of_sydney), on the Site of First Government House landing page at The Historic Houses Trust.
- Laila Ellmoos and Inara Walden (2011). "Museum of Sydney" (http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/museum_of_sydney). *Dictionary of Sydney*. Dictionary of Sydney Trust. Retrieved 9 October 2015. [CC-By-SA]
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